

Funding Local Stormwater Program

How Do We Pay for It?

Local stormwater management is becoming increasingly important in protecting our water quality. The big question facing local governments is, "How do we fund it?"

This Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team fact sheet provides information on funding options for local governments. More details can be found at the Action Team website: http://www.wa.gov/puget_sound/Programs/Funding.htm.



Photo courtesy of City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services

Getting Programs Started Using Federal and State Grants and Loans

Federal and state grants and loans are available for strategic stormwater management planning, establishing stormwater utilities, and initial capital investments. The following list contact information for funding programs that may be useful for comprehensive planning purposes and for site-specific projects involving stormwater source reduction or control:

1. Centennial Clean Water Fund, State Revolving Fund and Federal Nonpoint Source Management Grants; Kim McKee, Department of Ecology, (360)407-6566, e-mail: kmck461@ecy.wa.gov
2. Coastal Zone Management Grants; Bev Huether, Department of Ecology, (360) 407-7254, e-mail: bhue461@ecy.wa.gov
3. Flood Control Assistance Account Program (FCAAP); Bev Huether, Department of Ecology, (360) 407-7254, e-mail: bhue461@ecy.wa.gov
4. Flood Hazard Mitigation and Riverine Ecosystem Restoration Program (Challenge 21); Harry Kitch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Planning Division, (202) 761-0115, e-mail: harry.e.kitch@usace.army.mil
5. Flood Mitigation Assistance Program; Federal Emergency Management Agency, phone: (425) 487-4604

The following funds can be used for site-specific projects involving stormwater source reduction or control:

6. City Fish Passage Barrier, Stormwater and Habitat Restoration Program; Cliff Hall, Washington State Department of Transportation, Phone: 360-705-7499, hallc@wsdot.wa.gov
7. Public Works and Development Facilities Program; A. Leonard Smith, U.S. Department of Commerce, 206-220-7660, email: lsmith7@eda.doc.gov
8. Public Works Trust Fund, Construction Loan Program; Public Works Board, Cecilia Gardner, (360) 725-5006, e-mail: cecilia.gardener@pwb.wa.gov
9. Public Works Trust Fund, Pre-Construction Loan Program; Public Works Board, Cecilia Gardner, (360) 725-5006, e-mail: cecilia.gardener@pwb.wa.gov
10. Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) or Washington Surface Transportation Program; Kathleen Davis, Wash. State Dept of Transportation (360) 705-7377, e-mail: davisk@wsdot.wa.gov

Long-term Funding Options at the Local Level

Federal and state funds are best suited for initial seed money for a stormwater management program. A local means of generating stormwater funding is necessary for effective, long-term stormwater management. The following list cites some of the current statutes that enable local governments to fund and manage stormwater. The statutes in this document are linked electronically to the statutory language, for those reading this on the Puget Sound Action Team website address listed above.

Establishing County Programs

1. Counties are authorized to construct, operate and maintain a system of sewerage under RCW [36.94.020](#). A system of sewerage may include storm or surface water sewers (RCW [36.94.010](#)).
2. Counties can monitor point and nonpoint water pollution that is related to sewerage facilities and programs operated by the county. RCW [36.94.010](#).
3. Counties may provide assistance to aid low-income persons. [RCW 36.94.140](#)
4. Counties may also provide for, finance, and operate any of the facilities and services of the following types under RCW [36.94.020](#). Storm water management activities : RCW [36.89](#)
5. Flood control planning and regulations to avoid property damage: RCW [86.12](#)
6. Flood control zone districts for stormwater control improvements: RCW [86.15](#)
7. Lake management districts can conduct stormwater control and treatment: RCW [36.61](#)
8. Diking, drainage, and sewerage improvement districts: RCW [85.08](#), [85.15](#)

Financing County Programs

To finance stormwater efforts under any of the above programs, a county can implement uniform rates and charges as specified in [RCW 36.94.140](#). A county can also sell revenue bonds that will be serviced by the stormwater utility fees and general obligation bonds that will be guaranteed by the county's taxing authority, and can take out loans that are payable using the utility fees.

Establishing City Programs

Cities and towns may set up and operate sewerage systems and municipal utilities under RCW [35.21.215](#) (authorization), RCW [35.67.010](#) (powers), and RCW [35.92.020](#) (municipal utilities). A system of sewerage may include storm or surface water sewers as stated in RCW [35.67.010](#). The jurisdiction may provide for monitoring of point and nonpoint water pollution sources directly related to the sewerage facilities and programs operated by a city or town, [RCW 35.67.010](#).

Financing City Programs

Service fees billed to utility users as service beneficiaries. RCW [35.67.020](#); RCW [35.92.020](#). Revenue bonds serviced by utility fees can also be used. General obligation bonds guaranteed by the municipal taxing authority are an option. Loans can also be taken out and serviced through fee collection. The program may provide assistance to aid low-income persons under RCW [35.67.020](#).

Special Purpose Districts

1. **Water-Sewer Districts:** These local improvement districts can be established to plan and implement projects to manage sewerage and stormwater. They can include all or portions of multiple jurisdictions (RCW [57.04.020](#)). General provisions can be found under [Title 57 - Water-Sewer Districts](#) Funding can include rates and charges for services provided as specified in RCW [57.08.081](#)
2. **Aquifer Protection Districts:** A jurisdiction may prepare a comprehensive plan to protect, preserve, and rehabilitate subterranean water, including ground water management programs adopted under [chapter 90.44 RCW](#). This plan may be prepared as a portion of a county sewerage and/or water general plan pursuant to [RCW 36.94.030](#) (RCW [36.36.040](#)). May construct sewerage collection, disposal, and treatment systems, which include stormwater. RCW [36.36.040](#) Aquifer protection areas are authorized to impose fees to pay for all stormwater collection, disposal and treatment activities performed. RCW [36.36.040](#)
3. **Shellfish Protection Districts:** Shellfish protection districts for counties having shellfish tidelands. [RCW 90.72](#). Jurisdictions may establish a shellfish protection district to respond to nonpoint pollution threats to water quality and shellfish farming or harvesting. This could include water quality monitoring, acquisition of undeveloped lands, stormwater management plan development, stormwater management project implementation. Authorized in Chapter [90.72.070](#) RCW. Funding for these districts could include county tax revenues, reasonable charges or rates for services provided by the district (cannot apply to forest land) and federal, state or private grants.
4. **Public Utility Districts:** A PUD may operate, as authorized by a county board of health, systems for the collection, interception and treatment of sewage, which includes stormwater (RCW [54.16.310](#)). The district may charge fees for stormwater services (RCW [54.24.080](#)) and levy taxes on property within the district (RCW [54.16.080](#)).
5. **Port Districts:** Port districts may exercise all the powers relating to systems of sewerage authorized by [RCW 35.67.010](#) and [35.67.020](#) for cities and towns (RCW [53.08.043](#)). Service fees may be charged (RCW [35.67.020](#)). Revenue bonds, general obligation bonds and loans by also be used and serviced by fees.
6. **Irrigation Districts:** These districts can construct, repair, purchase, lease, acquire, operate and maintain a system of drains, sanitary sewers, and sewage disposal or treatment plants, which may include stormwater (RCW [87.03.015](#)). Rates or tolls can be charged and revenue bonds issued (RCW [87.28.010](#)).

For more information, visit:

http://www.wa.gov/puget_sound/Programs/Funding.htm

If you need these materials in an alternative format, call our

TDD number 1-800-833-6388.